machines, the prices are approved by the Airport Director of the concerned Airport and displayed in the licensed premises at prominent location. As and when complaints of over-charging are received, the same are attended to at the respective airport promotly.

Enhancing seat capacity on International Routes

1233. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while the availability of seats on the main routes is slowly decreasing, Government's open sky policy to permit more international airlines to operate on these sectors has failed to take off;

(b) whether it is a fact that while there is a poor response from the US and Europe carriers, others are willing to increase their flights on these routes; and

(c) if so, the details of plan to increase its capacity on international flights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) No, Sir. Availability of seats in Winter, 2002 (November, 2002-April, 2003) has gone up by 5324 seats per week against the corresponding period of the previous year. Besides additional 20,215 seats per week have been deployed by various foreign airlines so far taking advantage of the "open sky policy" adopted by the Government of India.

(b) and (c) During the "Open sky policy", two European carriers, namely Lufthansa Airlines and Virgin Atlantic have mounted additional flights so far on Frankfurt-Bangalore and London-Delhi sector respectively. Airlines from other regions such as Singapore Airlines, Malayasia Airlines, Emirates, Sri Lankan Airlines and South African Airways also operated additional flights as part of the open sky policy.

Separate company for ground handling operations by AI

1234. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNITA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to create a separate subsidiary of Air India for its ground handling operations;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to prepare a financial restructuring strategy for Air India in order to bring it out of red?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The ground handling activities in Air India are presently carried out by the Ground Services Department. Air India proposes to set up a subsidiary for ground handling operations with a view to improving efficiency.

(c) Air India is already out of red as it made a profit in the last financial year.

Enquiring by DGCA

1235. SHRI R.K. ANAND:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Close call in mid-air near Mumbai Airport" which appeared in the Hindustan Times of 3rd January 2003;

(b) if so, whether an enquiry was ordered by the DGCA in this regard;

(c) if so, the details of the enquiry report; and

(d) the action taken by Government so that mid-air collisions does not occur in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The matter is under investigation by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.